

Montana Transportation Partnership  
October 20, 2004 10:00 A.M.  
301 South Park, Conference Room  
Helena, MT

Meeting Minutes  
As Amended February 02, 2005

Members and Guests Present:

Beverly Berg, MVR/BLVS  
Paula Cull, MSU-Billings  
Carol Carpenter, DPHHS/PAB  
Marlene Disburg, DPHHS, Director's Office  
Bev Hardy, LIFTT  
Lyn Hellegaard, Montana Transit Assoc.  
June Hermanson, MSU-Billings  
Mike Hermanson, MSU-Billings  
David Kack, MTP, WTI, MSU-Bozeman  
Carol Lambert, State Representative-HD1  
Bob Lawson, MCDD  
Bob Maffit, MILP-ILC  
Gerald Pease, State Senator-Dist. 21  
Ed Robinson, Helena Area Transit Service  
Tom Steyaert, MDOT, Transit Section  
Deborah Swingley, MCDD  
Jo Thompson, DPHHS/Medicaid Bureau  
Denise Wolf, MVR  
Mike Meyers, Independent Living Centers-Missoula  
(via speaker phone)

The meeting was called to order by Marlene Disburg, Chair. Discussion began with the last meeting's minutes and today's agenda, it was suggested that the meeting place also be included in the minutes. A motion to approve and pass the previous minutes was made and seconded - Maffit /Lawson.

A sign up sheet was started around the room with the request to include email addresses for new attendees. Introductions were made individually around the room.

**Policy & Procedures Manual**

The next item was the MTP Policies and Procedures Manual and began with a review of previous membership. At the last meeting, it became very difficult to track the various additions and deletions to the membership list. Therefore, at this meeting a list was projected on the wall and members could track changes as they were made.

The list that was compiled for membership was:

## **Section 2.6**

Identified as desired Regular Members are:

- Dept of Commerce (1)
- Department of Transportation – transit section (1)
- Department of PHHS – (3-one vote)  
Director appointment
- League of Cities (1)
- Dept of Labor and Industry (1)
- Office of Public Instruction (1)
- Montana Association of Counties (1)
- Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities (1)
- Montana Advocacy Program (1)
- Montana Transit Association (1)
- MT Association of Independent Disability Services (1)
- Independent Living Centers – Statewide (1)
- Statewide IL Council – (1)
- Representative of Higher Education (1)
- A member of the MT State Legislature (1) \*
- Representative of the Native American Nations (1) \*\*
- Persons identified as Transportation Disadvantaged (4 - all voting members) \*  
(i.e. senior citizens, persons with low income and people with disabilities)
- Representative of the Statewide Public Assistance Council (1)

For a total members of 24 Members

\* Costs for 1 member of the Legislature and 1 person who is transportation disadvantaged will be covered by the MT Council on Developmental Disabilities)

\*\* This representative could be someone from the Governor's Office on Indian Affairs

Voting members 21 members

Discussion items raised during the review of membership included:

There was a need to add-in a section regarding a Quorum of the membership for decision making purposes. The number of members necessary for a quorum to be decided and in case of a tie vote the Chair would be the tie breaker. No official action would be taken without the Quorum present.

There was discussion on why DPHHS had 3 members and only 1 vote. The justification was that DPHSS has the largest state resources in transportation (9 million dollars) and because they can bring such diverse expertise to the Partnership 3 members were allowed; however, only 1 vote to keep balance with other agencies and try to work toward actual consumer equality of influence.

A motion was made by Bob Lawson to delete one of the University representatives - there was a general University representative and a Rural Institute representative. Motion was seconded by Bob Maffit, and motion passed.

A question was raised as to why WTI was not a voting member. David Kack clarified his position – WTI is a Dept. of College of Engineering @ MSU-Bozeman. Because WTI has formally contracted with MTP for technical assistance their bylaws state they cannot be a voting member due to conflict of interest as mentioned before.

Bob Maffit suggests that MTP has spent a considerable amount of time considering the membership and voting by -laws section and needs to realize there is bound to be unforeseen changes. Motion made to proceed, and seconded.

### **Removal of Officers**

A draft of the proposed policy regarding the Removal of Officers was handed out. This draft is a compilation from several different entities with similar goals as MTP and was to be a starting point for discussion.

The Chair read from the Draft Handout 3.0, 3.3.5 Removal of Officers (attached). Officers were designated as the Chair, Vice Chair, and immediate past Chair.

Bob Lawson posed a question related the Executive Committee? It was pointed out that 4.0 defines the Executive Committee as the Chair, Vice Chair, immediate past Chair and 2 members.

Discussion followed regarding whether a quorum should be 2/3 of total 21 voting members (14), or 2/3 percentage of voting members present? It was decided that the policy should be 2/3 of quorum (also if officers abstain then the count necessary for a quorum would be reduced appropriately.) It was also decided that if multiple officers were in the process of removal an ad hoc committee would be appointed until the next scheduled election. Bob Maffit moved to accept the modification to the policies and procedures for removing officers, it was seconded and passed.

Bob Maffit moved to accept the Policy and Procedures as a whole document as modified. Discussion on 5.6 regarding “regular” members, “regular” members mentioned in other sections and accepted. Deborah Swingley seconded the motion and it was passed.

### **United We Ride Proposal**

Mike Hermanson lead the discussion related to the recently submitted United We Ride proposal. The basis of the proposal was to bring a variety of stakeholders from all areas of Montana together for a couple of days to develop a strategic plan for the coordination of human service transportation throughout the state. The meeting would be facilitated by Peter Shauer, a nationally known consultant who would bring a national perspective to the proceedings. At the end, there would be a Plan in place. The United We Ride request for proposals required that the proposal address one of three (3) funding area possibilities:

1. Assessment Process involving the Framework for Action tool developed by United We Ride.
2. Strategic Plan
3. Funding of one part of Strategic Plan items

Once the strategic plan is in place with some great ideas then if additional funding is available, we would be able to propose funding of one the parts of the Strategic Plan. The Federal level intent seems to be to try to offer similar opportunities over the next few years.

We haven't heard anything back on the proposal and are just waiting. They did ask for proposals from all 50 states so unless our proposal is completely different than what they were expecting it should be accepted. To Mike's knowledge this was the only proposal submitted from Montana. June Hermanson followed up with Easter Seals while in New York regarding the status of these grants and was told all the grants had been read. They did tell her every state will get what they wanted except for a couple of states asked for an excessive amount of money and they are trying to figure out how to handle that problem.

Marlene asked Mike to report to the group how the United We Ride could compliment the MTP activities. Mike responded that they would help us continue to spread the word regarding our philosophy. We could change our activities to include gathering information and concerns and identifying representatives throughout the state and provide them with money to attend the Strategic Planning meeting. This would broaden the prospective and give many more representatives an opportunity to meet with others who regularly attend transportation meetings. So much input could take us to the step of setting goals and activities to move things along and bring in a lot more possible partners throughout the state.

Marlene mentioned the Web as a useful resource for obtaining more information on the United We Ride Campaign. The web site mentions more regional meetings set up in the next six months, which indicates they plan to stick with this program. Mike added the site also has their Framework for Action, which is their assessment documents. The RFP indicated assessments we put together should be based on their Framework for Action. If and when funding is approved we will have to utilize their Framework for Action for both overall assessment and strategic planning.

#### **Update on Partnership Projects:**

##### **East Valley Bus Service (Helena Area)**

Ed Robinson reported that volume is steadily increasing and the program is going smoothly. They have hired a new Transportation Coordinator. Also have a new software package to produce schedules and reports (very user friendly).

He passed out the Public and Special Needs Transportation Overview, Options and Implications prepared by the Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc. It was prepared to provide information for their Board of Directors and the County Commissioners on where they are going with the transportation programs, which includes the East Helena Bus, Head Start and Senior buses. The County Commissioners will set up meetings with RMDC, TAC, MTP and all the city and county players to discuss what the future holds and sustainability. No word on when the meeting will be held.

The East Valley Bus service is going so well Ed expressed the concern that at some not too distant point they will have to return to the original premise and give precedence to the disabled and seniors. Presently anybody who needs a ride uses the bus. This may require some PR within the community to prevent ill feelings from the general population.

Joann asked if the success of the bus brought complaints of unfair competition from other local business (i.e. taxi services, etc.). Response was a definite no. The two biggest complaints they've had is the bus won't deviate from the route in

Helena and act as a taxi within the city limits. Once the bus gets them to Helena, they must find other ways to get to destinations. The other complaint is about the pre-release passengers' language & actions. The pre-release center ensures that will be taken care of immediately.

It was suggested that a letter of commendation be sent to MDOT, Transit Section for the outstanding work of Pat Sanders and Dave Jacobs on behalf of MTP. Marlene agreed to do this.

Lunch Break

#### MSU-Billings Contract Team

Mike Hermanson passed out a report on the Team's activities since the last meeting. Members of the team attended TAC meetings in Helena and Hamilton to keep momentum moving on coordination activities. They also held Transportation Roundups in Glasgow and Roundup. The Fort Peck Transportation Program members also attended the Glasgow Roundup.

Mike assisted with the completion of the United We Ride proposal to the Governor's office.

June has been working with State Independent Living Council on legislative initiatives.

June attended the Assoc. of Programs for Rural Independent Living national meeting in Missoula. June also attended the People on the Move Training in New York City and attended the Public Service Commission meeting in Hamilton to testify as to the need to expand the decision from the Hamilton area to the entire area served by the Bitterroot Bus.

The LIFTT survey in the Billings area has been completed and results will be sent out in the News Flash.

#### Ravalli County Bitterroot Bus

Joann restated the need to expand service of the Bitterroot Bus to the entire area surrounding Hamilton, which the Public Service Commission has been blocking with a 24-hour notice restriction for services.

The Public Service Commission held a scheduled hearing which was actually cancelled and a pre-conference meeting was held in lieu of the hearing. At that pre-conference meeting the Commissioners suggested the Bitterroot Bus apply for a Class A motor carrier certificate. An agreement was reached between Bitterroot Bus and Valley Taxi whereas the PSC authority will exclude the 24-hour notice in the Hamilton area. It was also recommended that Bitterroot Bus apply for a class A license to operate a fixed bus route. Public comment was

taken at this pre-conference and several people stood up and commented as to the restriction remaining in place outside of the Hamilton area.

### **Montana Transportation Partnership Draft Executive Order**

A Draft of the proposed Executive Order to formalize MTP was prepared by David Kack and Mike Hermanson. MTP members received a copy of the Executive Order as a DRAFT. The Executive Order has been reviewed by Gail Gray and John Chappius, DPHHS Director and Deputy Director. Gail Gray has called David Galt to begin discussion on the Order and will make contact with other cabinet members also. Marlene emphasized that the Order would not be sent to the Governor's Office by MTP prior to discussion by cabinet members under the leadership of Gail Gray. It is expected that changes and clarifications will be recommended.

Completion of this process by 12/31/04, especially in the event there is a change of administration would be best. A motion was made to endorse the Draft Executive Order, and draft a letter expressing our desire to complete the effort by 12/31/ 04 to Gail Gray. Maffit/Swingley. Motion passed. Yea Votes: Beverly Berg, Carol Carpenter, Bev Hardy, June Hermanson, Mike Hermanson, David Kack, Bob Lawson, Bob Maffit, Deborah Swingley, o Thompson, Denise Wolf, Mike Mayer. Nay Votes: Tom Steyaert, Lyn Hellegaard.

Marlene was asked to draft the letter for the Executive Committee. It was suggested that a timeline be defined with the understanding that the Order is a "working document".

It was also recommended that if the Executive Order didn't make it through the Governor's office it could be put through the Legislature. Senator Pease and Representative Lambert both suggested starting with a bill in the Legislature and also something in the Senate. They cautioned that MTP doesn't want to drop coordination with the SILC and should communicate with them first.

Then there was discussion related to collaborating with the State Independent Living Council on legislative initiatives. There was significant discussion related to changing the Public Service Commission regulations. There was agreement on continuing to recommend legislation exempting Rural Transportation (Section 5311) providers from PSC authority. Rep. Carol Lambert agreed to draft and sponsor legislation to this effect and Senator Pease agreed to draft companion legislation in the Senate.

There was discussion regarding seeking funding for a full time position within the Dept. of Health and Human Services for a transportation coordinator. No formal action was taken. Marlene Disburg noted that the DPHHS Transportation Coordination group maybe a good place to discuss this issue.

Meeting was adjourned.